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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

MESSENGER AHMAD OF QADIAN

By Mohammad Sharif Bajwa

رسلا مبشرين و منذرين لئلا يكون للناس على الله حجة بعد الرسل—(سورة النساء آيت 163).

The Apostles We sent as Messengers of glad tidings and warnings, so that the people might not have an argument (of excuse) against Allah after the Apostles.—IV : 163.

This verse shows that from time to time in the history of the human race God has revealed His will and guidance to man through His chosen messengers. If this is so then it will have to be admitted that the need for such revelation and guidance by means of the special messengers is even more pressing to-day. The conflict and discord which exists in these days between the various religions and sects is such that the like of it is not to be met with in the past.

In these days the Muslims, the Christians, the Jews and all other tribes and nations require a Messenger. Moreover each religion in its place is divided into hundreds of sects. In a world where most of the economic and social forces at work tend towards a

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process of unification, there is disunity among the sons of man. And the causes of this disunity lie so deep that nothing but a most daring and radical reformation can remove the germs of disease. But reformations of this kind originate only with the chosen Messengers of God who alone possess the dynamic energy and the spiritual qualities necessary for the task.

The need for a Messenger of God in these days is very great indeed. In the past there is not a single instance when the necessity of such a Messenger of God was felt and he failed to appear. To-day when sinfulness, conflict, discord and disagreement have exceeded all limits, is there any reason why a Reformer should not appear to guide men to the kingdom of God ?

Let us see what the Holy Quran says in this respect :

وان من قرية الا خلا فيها نذير ۔

There has been no people to whom We did not send a reformer. (XXXV : 24.)

Again :

ولكل قوم هاد ۔

And every nation had a guide. (XIII : 7.)

This is in regard to the past. In regard to the future the Holy Quran says :

يبنى آدم اما ياتينكم رسل منكم يقصون عليكم آيتى
فمن اتقى واصلح فلا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون ۔

O children of Adam! If there come to you Apostles from amongst yourselves narrating to you My signs, then whoso shall fear Allah and do good works, no fear shall be upon them nor shall they grieve. (VII : 34.)

These verses clearly indicate that the deep spiritual needs of human nature are always satisfied, and ever since the beginning of creation it has been the case that whenever evil enveloped the people a Messenger was sent to dispel the gloom.

Then why should this eternal heavenly law be abandoned now ?

Concerning this question the Holy Prophet

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Muhammad (peace and the blessings of Allah be on him) says :—

ان الله يبعث لهذه الامة على راس كل مائة سنة من يجدد لها دينها (ابو داؤد)۔

"God will raise among the Muslims, at the beginning of each century, men who will renew the faith (by excluding from it false doctrines and beliefs which may have crept into it)." (*Abu Da'ud.*)

This promise, no doubt announced by the Prophet at the behest of God, has been fulfilled during every century for the last 1400 years and consequently during this fourteenth century also its realisation was inevitable. The Divine Messenger raised according to the said prophecy in the beginning of this (the fourteenth) century of Hijra is Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian. Beside him there is none in the world who has claimed that position and proved himself to be the Spiritual Leader or the Divine Messenger raised under the authority of the said prophecy.

Blessed is he who believes in him; but he who opposes him fights against Allah and proves himself to be an enemy of Islam. For he rejects one of the most essential points on which the truth of Islam rests, a unique quality which no other religion possesses, namely that God Himself has undertaken the defence and preservation of Islam in its original purity for all times by means of His chosen servants raised for the purpose.

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DID JESUS DIE ON THE CROSS?

By Zahur-ud-Din Butt, B.Sc., LL.B.

A careful study of the account given by the Gospels reveals the fact that the Prophet Jesus, (on whom be peace), *did not die* on the Cross. He was no doubt put on the Cross but was taken down *alive* in an unconscious state. The proceedings of the case against him began at the third hour of the day, *i.e.*, at about 9 A.M. His statement was taken at the sixth hour, *i.e.*, at 12 noon. This is so according to the Gospel of St. John. All the Gospel writers unanimously state that he "gave up the ghost" at about 3 P.M. The Jewish Sabbath began at sunset. So he was taken down from the Cross after remaining only six hours on the Cross. Now death by crucifixion was always tardy. It was for this reason that Pilate "marvelled if he were already dead" (Mark 15 : 44).

Pilate as a magistrate had his own experience in the matter. His opinion is really an "expert opinion" that Jesus could not die on the Cross in a few hours. The two robbers who were crucified with Jesus and taken down at the same time with him, were still alive. Here is proof that Jesus was also alive when taken down from the Cross. When we remark that his legs were not broken, we have to agree with the verdict given by medical men that this was not sufficient to cause death but merely a swoon. The spear being plunged into his side, we are told that *blood and water flowed.* This is a sign that circulation had not ceased. We are told that Joseph, a wealthy disciple of Jesus, begged the body from Pilate who consented and that he laid Jesus in a spacious room hewn out in the side of a rock. When the tomb was seen on the third day, the stone was found to have been removed from its mouth. What better proof is needed to show that it was not the case of a

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super natural rising from the dead! Mary Magdalene was accosted by a man whom she took to be the gardener, but who discovered himself to her as Jesus. Here we have a devout follower of Jesus, who knew him most intimately, not recognising him on account of a disguise. But why this disguise? A disguise was unnecessary if he had risen from the dead. If he had really risen from the dead, had he appeared to the Romans and Jewish Rabbis and Pharisees, they would have hailed him as the son of God and worshipped him. He could have in that case founded the "Kingdom of Heaven" on earth there and then as he had often wished. Here he could have shown them the most convincing miracle, the best "sign" that was needed.

But what do we actually find? He appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmans and went on with them and they did not know who he was until the characteristic mannerism of Jesus on the partaking of food revealed to them the fact that it was Jesus himself. So complete was the disguise.

It was in the same body of flesh and bones that the disciples saw him and the wounds were still there on his body. He showed them to the disciples. In all post-crucifixion appearances Jesus is found concealing himself. Why? There is no escape from the conclusion that he was afraid of being seen. He dared not show himself in public lest his enemies find him again. They would certainly kill him. Why did he undertake a journey to Galilee with two of his disciples? If it was the case of a supernatural rising from the dead why did not Jesus ascend to heaven at Jerusalem? The inevitable conclusion is that he was flying for refuge. Even the Pharisees were sure that Jesus had escaped death on the Cross. One of them hastened to Pilate and requested him that Jesus' tomb should be 'made sure' lest he should rise from the dead and the "*last error should be worse than the first.*" What was the first error? The Jews had realised the serious error that had been committed in taking down Jesus from the Cross before his death. A Jew could not possibly believe that Jesus would rise

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from the dead miraculously. His apprehension was therefore based on his belief that Jesus had escaped death on the Cross. Jesus prayed the whole night before his arrest to be saved from the death on the Cross. "Father ! if it be possible, put this cup from me." We are told that this prayer of Jesus was accepted. We read "when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him who was able to save him from death, *he was heard in that he prayed*" (Heb., 5 : 7).

All the above considerations conclusively prove that Jesus did not die on the Cross. Is not the Holy Quran simply faithful to truth and reality when it says "And they (*i.e.*, Jews), did not kill him, (*i.e.*, Jesus), nor did they crucify him to death, but they were mistaken ? (4 : 157).

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A CRAWLING ORDER FOR THE HINDUS

or

A CRITICISM OF

THE PUNJAB HINDU CHARITABLE AND RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS BILL

(SWAMI DHARMA THEERTHAJI MAHARAJ, B.A., LL.B.)

[Reproduced from a pamphlet sent to us by the author for this purpose—*Ed.*]

Introduction

It is the most reactionary, damaging and inequitable measure ever brought before a modern Indian Legislature, and if passed into Law will be an act of betrayal of the Hindus, and a substantial abdication of the sovereign power and obligation of the Punjab Government to protect the rights and liberties of a large section of its subjects, involving, as it does, the creation of something like an independent government, a Hindu Raj in its worst and most dreaded form of a 'Caste Raj,' with separate franchise, separate constituencies, separate legislature, separate executive, separate judiciary and separate laws, all functioning without the control of the existing government and exercising jurisdiction over the souls as well as bodies of its victims.

I. The Statement of Objects and Reasons is in some important respects misleading and incorrect and disguises the true nature and scope of the Bill.

(*a*) It is said in the Statement that the Board constituted under the Act shall have no hand in the settlement of Scheme of Religious Worship and Ceremonials meant for Dharmashalas, temples and Maths under the control of Sadhus and Mahants, that

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the religious liberties and activities of the Mahants will not be interfered with in the least by the operations of the Bill, that the Board will consist of members elected by the general public interested in the religious places (and other members), and the Bill is simply to make the rights of the public easily obtainable and rapidly enforceable. The provisions of the Bill do not corroborate these statements.

(1) The Sadhus and Mahants are to be deprived even of their liberty of conscience. The Hindu Religious Fraternities are generally more liberal than *Grihastas*. They do not believe in all the meaningless caste distinctions. They allow great freedom of religious thought. But the Bill enunciates a narrow creed of Sanatana Dharma in Section 2 (9) opposed to all liberal ideas, and seeks to impose it on every Sadhu and Mahant. If they do not accept this creed they shall cease to hold office. (Sections 61 and 62).

(2) The temples, Dharmshalas and Maths managed by Sadhus and Mahants have been compulsorily brought under the Bill and included in Schedules III, IV and V, without giving an opportunity to the Sadhus and Mahants to show cause why they should not be so included even according to the principles of the Bill. If an opportunity is given to them, they will be able to establish that they do not believe in the narrow Sanatana Dharma as arbitrarily defined by the Bill, and therefore the Bill ought not to apply to them at all.

(3) The Bill gives power to the Board to call for a scheme of administration or scheme of religious worship or ceremonials, and if the scheme is not settled or if the scheme is not agreeable to the Board, the Judicial Committee of the Board may settle a scheme and enforce it, and there is not even a right of appeal. (Section 69 (2)).

(4) Section 70 provides that Mahants shall submit their budgets to the Sri Mahants, and that Sri Mahants shall carry out the instructions issued by the Board. In this way the Board can effectively, though indirectly, interfere with the budgets, in spite of the assurance

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in the Statement that the Board shall not interfere with the framing of the budgets.

(5) The liberty of the Mahant to take disciples has been extremely curtailed, and no one is allowed to become a disciple by renouncing the world without first satisfying the local Panchayat. (Section 66).

(6) Sections 71, 72, 73 prescribe for what purposes only the funds and income of the temples, Maths, etc., should be used. They do not mention anything about the expenses of Sadhus or Mahants or their disciples and followers, which in fact ought to form the first charge. If these Sections are enforced strictly, the Sadhus, Mahants, their disciples and followers may find it impossible to use any fund for their own maintenance.

(7) Sections 22, 61, 62 and 91 give sweeping powers to the Board to persecute and prosecute the Sadhus and Mahants and make their life miserable when they are allowed to remain in office, and to remove them from office even on minor considerations or vague charges. The provisions of the Bill are so reactionary and drastic that it would seem that the main object of the Bill running through and through from the beginning to the end is the steady extirpation of all Sadhus and Mahants and the bringing of all their properties and institutions under the control of the priest-community.

(*b*) The general public interested in the institutions is the Hindu public. The Hindu public as such have no voice in the election of the members of the Board. In fact, by giving narrow definitions to the words "Hindu" and "Sanatana Dharma," the Bill deprives the vast majority of the enlightened Hindus of the right to vote and be elected to the Board. In effect, the Board will consist of only the most illiberal and caste-ridden members of the priest-community and others who are subservient to them, and they will be elected by a small group of illiberal and caste-minded members of the priest-community and people subservient to them as we shall see later.

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II. The Bill tends to deprive effectively the Hindu public as such of their immemorial and existing rights in the temples, Dharmashalas and Maths, and to establish the supremacy and monopoly of the priest-community over the entire Hindu society and all Hindu institutions.

Section 2 (10) defines who is a Hindu. This definition does not seem to be based on any Shastra or Law. A Sikh is debarred from declaring himself or becoming a Hindu, while Aryas, Brahmos, Buddhists, etc. are not excluded. Why is this invidious distinction? Hindus respect the cow. They respect their kings, their *Gurus*, elders and many other persons, things and animals as non-Hindus also do. No Shastra imposes respect for cow as a condition for being a Hindu. The Bill does that. If a Hindu illtreats a cow or ceases to respect it, it seems that according to the Bill, he will cease to be a Hindu. No doubt, Hindus do not profess the religion of Islam, Christianity, Judaism, etc. But the Bill says that they shall not profess their religious doctrines. Those liberal Hindus like Theosophists, Brahmos, followers of Rama Krishna Mission and millions of other Hindus who approve of and preach the good teachings of other religions may thus be prevented from declaring themselves as Hindus. The Hindus of the Bill will therefore be only the illiberal section of the Hindu public.

Even this section of the Hindus as defined by the Bill have no right under the Bill. The Hindu public which enjoys rights under the Bill is narrowed down and restricted by the condition that the Hindu must believe in Santana Dharma if he should have a right to vote, to stand for election to the Board or Panchayats, or to be Trustee or Mahant, etc. [Section 2 (13)] lays down that a Hindu has no 'interest' in any Dharmashala unless he believes in the Sanatana Dharma as defined by the Bill. A Hindu cannot be nominated to the Judicial Committee unless he believes in the same narrow creed. So only those few Hindus who accept the creed of the Bill will have any of the rights conferred by the Bill. The other Hindus will be deprived of the rights they now enjoy by custom and

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law by Sections 1, 22 and 93 of the Bill. The high qualifications fixed for the voters and candidates are a further limitation on the rights of the Hindu public.

We shall see later that the creed of Sanatana Dharma prescribed by the Bill is so narrow, unshastric, untrue and humiliating to the vast majority of the Hindus that very few self-respecting Hindus, except members of the priest-community, will care to accept it. They will prefer to keep out of the Bill. In this way the majority of the self-respecting Hindus will be forced to abandon their immemorial rights. The priest-community and their subservient followers will become masters of all the institutions and properties.

III. The Bill enunciates a new creed of Sanatana Dharma —a creed which is diametrically opposed to the Sanatana Dharma of the Vedas, Upanishads and Shastras, and which will make Sanatana Dharma unacceptable to all fair-minded Hindus and an object of ridicule to all enlightened persons. As this creed is sought to be propagated and enforced through law, the temples, the Dharmashalas, Maths, Panchayats, etc., it will create a great split in the Hindu community, compel most Hindus to disown Sanatana Dharma or accept the humiliation and subjection to the priest-community who will once more become the masters of the Hindus as in pre-British days. The regime of caste and priestcraft will be restored, and caste persecutions and excommunications will be revived.

According to section 1 (9) a Hindu to be considered as a Sanatana Dharmi :

(*1*) *Must recognise the Vedas as revealed.*

So far as Sanatani Hindus are concerned, to the vast majority of them the Vedas have remained and still remain a sealed book. It was not revealed by the priests who kept them as a secret. It was the Western scholars who first brought them out from secrecy. Even now the priests generally throughout India propagate the idea that other Hindu communities should not read the Vedas. The language of the Vedas remains unrevealed even to great scholars ; what to say of the ordinary Hindus. The Bill does not make any provision to teach the Vedas. And, as we shall show, the

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Hindus may even be told under the Bill that except the priest-community no other Hindus are even now entitled to read or listen to the Vedas. Books which are so forcibly kept sealed and secret must be recognised as revealed if the Hindu should become a Sanatana Dharmi Hindu. It is placing a premium on ignorance and superstition or it aims at restricting Sanatana Dharma to the priest-community. And what is the meaning of 'reveal'? Is it according to the meaning given by Arya Samajists, by Christians, by Muslims, by Buddhists or English dictionaries? Is there any injunction in any Shastras that one must believe certain books as revealed in order to become a Sanatana Dharmi Hindu? Most Hindus respect the Vedas as they respect the god in a temple. There is no necessity to introduce in a Bill any incorrect reference to this sacred feeling. No judicial court will be able to determine exactly the meaning of 'revealed.'

If the Arya Samajists were to say that the Vedas should be recognised as 'revealed,' they would be justified because they are prepared to teach the Vedas to all. They are truly Veda-revealers.

(2) A Sanatana Dharmi Hindu must believe in Caste by birth.

Most Hindus of the present day *observe* 'caste by birth' because it is the social custom and law, and they are not free to violate it. But there will be hardly any fair-minded Hindu with some education who will *believe* in it. Even leaders of the most orthodox section do not believe in it. They realise it is untrue and an evil. They have refused to return caste in the recent census. They have written books condemning it. They daily violate its restrictions in many respects. All true Sannyasis and Sadhus are by the principles of their order required to ignore it and everywhere they openly preach against it. All great national leaders have cursed this evil. To ninety-five per cent of the Hindus caste is a humiliation and a disadvantage. To many millions of Hindus it is worse than slavery. The only section of the Hindus to whom caste by birth

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without any consideration of character, education, profession, *Guna* and *Karma*, is a pleasure and a profit, are the priest-community. They alone really want it. Excepting a handful of these people, all other Hindus must sacrifice their conscience, their self-respect, their rights and status as Hindus and citizens, and disown their immemorial religious beliefs, if they accept this condition imposed by the Bill. But if they want any right under the Bill they must do so !

They Vedas, Upanishads and the Dharma Shastras do not recognise caste by birth only. No great Rishi or Acharya or Saint or Teacher has supported it. It is against all the good teachings of Hindu religion. It is against all ideas of truth, justice and freedom. It is without any principle or scientific justification. It is condemned by all civilised religions and peoples of the world. It is the chief cause of Hindu downfall. It is to-day an obstacle to India's unity and freedom. It is such an institution which the Hindus are asked to *believe* in. The only object of this provision is to establish the supremacy and monopolies of the priest-community, and to exclude all other Hindus from the benefits of the Bill and the Hindu institutions.

A true Hindu and a true Sanatana Dharmi will never believe in caste by birth, though he may observe it because he is bound. Those who respect the Vedas must therefore insist that a man who believes in caste by birth cannot be a true Hindu or Sanatana Dharmi. The Bill, if it is for the good of Hindu religion and society, should exclude those who believe in caste by birth from all its benefits and the services. Because those who believe in caste by birth are enemies of true Hindu religion and true Sanatana Dharma; they are enemies of Hindu society; they are exploiters of the Hindus who want to keep the Hindus divided, weak and disgraced. What is more, they can never be good citizens in a civilised country of the present age. They will always be interested in crushing their brother citizens and dominating over them.

(3) *A Sanatana Dharmi Hindu must accept as*

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binding on himself the religious and theological doctrines of the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Smritis or the Puranas.

He need not believe in the Vedas, but must believe in caste. He need not accept the Vedas as binding, but must accept the Puranas or Smritis as binding. In fact, he must not believe in the Vedas because the Vedas do not recognise caste by birth. He should not consider the Vedas as binding because if he does he cannot believe in caste by birth. So the binding authorities are the Puranas, Smritis, Ramayana and Mahabharata. Why? Because these books inculcate not only the worship of God but also the worship of Brahmans, and they make it obligatory on the Hindus to perform all the ceremonies and Poojas which will bring profit to the priest, and what is more they establish that the vast majority of the Hindus have no right for Vedas, for Mantra or Tantra, for Pooja or penance, for any decisive voice in the management of the temples or other religious institutions, or for framing social or religious laws, or for altering the existing ones. If the Hindus accept these books as binding upon them, they will be losing many valuable rights as human beings, which they have acquired under the British rule. Sadhus and Mahants may be told that they have no right to become Sannyasis or to renounce the world. Even in the judicial courts and the Legislatures it may be argued that the Hindus have bound themselves voluntarily by these books and they are debarred from doing anything against their directions. Hindus will be silenced and crippled; the priests will become their law-givers and priestcraft will become their religion; temples, Dharmashalas and Maths will be governed according to their principles; and as the Statement of Objects and Reasons proclaims, the Bill will truly take back the Hindus to the medieval ages!

Armed with this binding authority of the Puranas and Smritis, the priests can start caste-persecutions and excommunications all over the Province. They can debar all liberal Hindus from temples, Dharmashalas

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and Maths on some pretext or other, because a Shastra can be easily quoted for any position if the priest is clever enough. In fact, the Punjab Legislature is asked not to pass its own law but to give a blank cheque to the priests to enforce the law of unknown books—unknown to the Legislature and unknown to the people to be bound by them.

This is the Sanatana Dharma defined in the Bill; the Bill wants to make use of the temples, Dharmashalas, etc., and their funds for the propagation and promotion of this creed [Section 51 (*c*)].

IV. The scheme of administration proposed in the Bill is bound to be inefficient, and lead to corruption and also exploitation.

The central authority is in a Board elected for five years (Sections 3 and 4) by Sanatana Dharmi voters. But this authority is to be actually exercised by an Executive Committee of five persons [11 (c)]. A majority of these five, *viz.*, three persons will wield almost all the authority under the Bill without any control from the Government. Even Municipalities, Corporations, Joint Stock Companies, Schools and Colleges, Co-operative Societies, etc., have the benefit of Government control. But this Hindu Religious Endowment Board, exercising jurisdiction throughout the Province, with many hundreds of institutions under its control, with power to influence the social status, rights and privileges and the religious consolations of millions of Hindus is to be entirely free from all Government control. Because the Government is not a Puranic Government guided by the priests and their Shastras! This arrangement would be an abdication of the duty imposed upon the Government to safeguard not only public property and funds, but also the freedom of the people.

If the Bill is for the better management of the institutions, the entire executive authority, from the Central Committee down to the village Panchayat, should be under the direct control of a Government Department in charge of a Hindu Minister. The elec-

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tive bodies should have only legislative functions. Otherwise the Bill will be creating a Government, a new State within a State. Because the Board constituted under the Bill proposes to exercise Legislative, Executive and Judicial authority in the affairs covered by the Bill uninterfered with by the existing Government. It is a kind of Swaraj granted to the priests, a Dominion Status for the rule of caste and priestcraft.

The Bill creates three classes of electorates, three classes of candidates for election, with three grades of qualifications, and provides for general elections in three years for the Panchayats, and five years for the Board. This arrangement will be a waste of time and money and fruitful of constant wrangling and endless trouble to the people and the authorities. The provisions for the election of Sri Mahants are vague and unworkable.

V. The Bill has no important constructive proposals for the better management of the Hindu institutions or for making them more beneficial to the Hindus.

If temples, Dharmashalas and Maths are to become really serviceable to the Hindus they should be managed by trained workers or qualified missionaries or Sadhus. There is no provisions to turn out such workers who will serve the public instead of exploiting them. The Bill has no hopes to give to the down trodden Hindus, and to those who are oppressed and disgraced by caste. The Bill does not want to give any definite liberal religious instruction to the Hindu people. The Bill has no provision to divert the surplus funds to useful purposes, such as water-supply, roads, aid to agricultural improvement, development of village industries etc. The Bill does not think of the Hindu widows, orphans, destitutes and crippled who deserve the help of all religious institutions and persons. It has no message of unification or consolidation of the Hindus. It is barren of all substantial benefit to the Hindu masses.

VI. Arya Samajist must be Careful.

The Bill does not clearly exclude the Arya Samaj,

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as it does the Sikhs. It gives power to the Board to call for returns and statements even from private institutions (Section 86). The Bill generally applies to all Hindu religious and charitable endowments created for public purposes. [Section 1 (2)]. If the Arya Samaj is a Hindu institution it may be covered by this Section. Section 19 gives power to the Board to bring under the operation of the Bill all shrines and their properties situated in the Punjab and governed by the Bill. The Board may include the Arya Samaj institutions in their list prepared under Section 19, and there will then be no remedy open to the Arya Samajists to get out of its operation. The result will be that the Arya Samaj will come under the control of a Board and Panchayats in which there will be no Arya Samajists and in whose election the Arya Samajists will have no voice at all.

In fact one underlying motive appears to be the creation of a strong orthodox opposition to the liberal influence of the Arya Samaj among the Hindus and in the long run to absorb the Samaj itself into the reactionary Puranic Hinduism, just in the same way as Buddhism and other progressive movements were crushed.

VII. The Bill gives permanent recognition and status to the Sanatana Dharma Pratinidhi Sabha and helps it to establish affiliated Sabhas all over the Province by holding out to the members of the Executive Committees of all Sanatana Dharma Sabhas of three yaars' standing the right to be registered as electors even if they do not possess any other qualification prescribed for the general electors. (Sections 29 and 42.)

Side by side with the destruction of the religious fraternities, there is another underlying motive in the Bill, and that is the establishment of a Hindu organisation based on caste and the ascendency of the priest-community. The Sanatana Dharma Pratinidhi Sabha is to be the nucleus of this Puranic revival. The Bill gives a permanent legal status to the Sabha. The Sabha has recommended some amendments, and it seems they have been accepted by the member-in-charge of

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the Bill. These amendments place the real motive of the authors of the Bill beyond doubt. According to the amended provisions, the Sabha will have six seats reserved for its representatives in every District Committee. The Brahman Poojaris are also to have special representation. It would appear that the members of the Sabha can vote and stand as candidates in the general constituencies also. Thus they will practically have a double vote and a double representation, which means the District Committees will, if not immediately, in a short time be completely dominated by the Sabha. The scheme of the Central Board also has been altered to serve the same purpose of the gradual aggrandisement of the Sabha. It looks almost like a calculated plot to attain the ascendency and monopoly of all real power for the Sabha under the leading strings of the priest-community. The procedure is too patent to deceive any thoughtful person.

First in the name of Hindu Society persecute and destroy the Sadhus and Mahants.

Second in the name of Sanatana Dharma deprive the Hindus of all their rights.

Third in the name of Sanatana Dharama Pratinidhi Sabha deprive the Sanatani public of their right by manipulating the elections.

Last keep the leading strings of the Sabha in the hands of the priest-community.

The result will be that the priest-community will once more, as in ancient days, ride on the necks of the Hindus and become the sacred masters of all their Dharmashalas, temples and Maths, propagating with the sanction of the State the rule of caste, and the religion of priestcraft. The Hindus of the Punjab must be worse than simpletons to swallow this bait.

All reference to the Sanatana Dharma Pratinidhi Sabha and its affiliated Sabhas should be deleted from the Bill. All the voters are Hindus. The Sabha has no interest or right or even status distinct from the Hindu voters or the Hindu public. Special representa-

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tion of the Sabha would therefore be nothing more than a trick to defeat the Hindu public and the purpose of the Bill. It would be just like allowing the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League to send their own representatives to thé Assemblies and Councils in opposition to the elected representatives of the people.

VIII. The Bill is morally unsupportable and will be a gross misuse of the machinery of the Punjab Legislature.

From the ancient days down to the present the priest-community of the Hindus have always stood for the suppression of the freedom and self-respect of the Hindus and their exploitation by all the tricks of priestcraft and superstition. In opposition to the priests there have always existed various orders of Sadhus, Monks, Ascetics and Reformers preaching against the evils of caste and priestcraft. The priests as the religious leaders of the Hindu public have utilised every opportunity of using the power of the Governments for crushing their enemies, the religious fraternities. It was with the help of the Rajput conquerors that the priests mercilessly destroyed the Buddhist monks, took possession of their monasteries and their wealth and converted them into rich temples. It was with the help often of the Muslim Rulers that the priests persecuted the great Vaishnavite saints of North India and Maharashtra. It was with the help of the East India Company that the priests established their control over the South Indian temples which before that period were governed by the Agamas and did not recognise caste. Now with the help of the Punjab Legislature, the attempt is being made to destroy the hereditary enemies of the priests—the Sadhus and Mahants. No doubt the latter have degenerated, but the Bill has really not a single constructive suggestion to reform them, or to promote the creation of an order of competent Sadhus and workers or to preserve the original liberal character of the religious fraternities. On the other hand, the remedy proposed by the Bill is the steady extirpation of the religious fraternities, the destruction of the liberal character and ideals of the

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foundations, and the imposition of a narrow creed and the supremacy of the hereditary priests.

The Sadhus may spoil their own lives and injure a few who are in close proximity to them. Their capacity for mischief stops there. But the priests roam about everywhere. They go into every Hindu home. They are in every sphere of life—social, religious, political, educational and administrative. Everywhere they forge fetters of caste and crush the freedom and manliness of the Hindus and frustrate the national movements. In the Punjab they have not got sufficient economic resources or social status. The Bill will put the immense resources of the temples, Dharamashalas, Maths, etc., in their hands and raise them once more in public life as the leaders of the Hindu slaves.

The simple-minded Hindus of the Punjab have two great yearnings and these sacred yearnings are to be exploited by the Bill. (1) The Hindus passionately love the term 'Sanatana Dharma.' They would like to preserve it at any cost. It is an inspiration to them. Therefore exactly this word is used in the Bill, quite against the teachings of all the Shastras and scriptures, to make the Hindus yield their necks to the yoke of caste humiliation and priestly tyranny. (2) Secondly, the Hindus of the Punjab want to organise themselves like the Sikhs and the Aryas. They point to the Sikh Gurdwara Act. They are jealous of the great work that the Arya Samaj is doing. The Hindus would make any sacrifice to be able to consolidate their society like their neighbour communities. This aspiration is to be exploited by the Bill to make the Hindus once more bow at the feet of the priests. The Sikhs and Aryas have saved themselves from the worst sins of the Hindus; their organisations aim at a larger life of greater freedom, justice and brotherhood. Theirs are righteous organisations. But alas! the Hindus want to organise in order to revive the evils, frauds, exploitation and humiliation of their fellow-men. Theirs is a sinful organisation. It aims at thwarting the liberal influences of the Sikhs, the Aryas, the Brahmos, and the great national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, and make one

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last effort to resuscitate the dying forces of caste slavery and priestly tyranny. The Bill is an undisguised challenge to the Indian National Congress to do its worst to abolish untouchability and throw open temples to all Hindus.

IX. Suggestions for overhauling the Bill.

(*a*) The definition of 'Hindu' should be changed thus: "A Hindu means a native of India, other than a Muslim, Christian, Parsi, Jew or follower of any religion started outside India, who makes a declaration that he is a Hindu.

(*b*) All reference to Sanatana Dharma should be deleted from the Bill. It is a sacred word and all the Vedas cannot exhaust its meaning. It would be a sacrilege to give it a crude description in one clause of a Bill.

(*c*) All reference to the S. D. P. Sabha and its affiliated Sabhas should be deleted for reasons stated above.

(*d*) Franchise should be widened and there should be only one register of electors, instead of three. A form may be prescribed for applying for registration as an elector and it may be priced at one anna. Any Hindu who can read and understand the form and fill it up in his own handwriting should be entitled to be so registered. The register may be renewed every year. The expenses of preparing the register and the elections will thus be met by the one anna which every voter will have to pay for the form.

(*e*) The qualifications of the candidates for election should be revised.

(*f*) Those who believe in caste by birth should be disenfranchised and debarred from all services in the temples, Dharamashalas, Maths, etc. Because they cannot be good citizens, and they are believing in something which is opposed to the teachings of the Hindu scriptures, Rishis and teachers.

(*g*) Provision should be made for establishing

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Training Schools for Hindu workers and missionaries and for recruiting Mahants, Sadhus, Trustees, Poojaries, Managers, etc., from among trained men only.

(*h*) Funds and income of the institutions should be used only for the maintenance of the institutions, their inmates and workers, for the performance of worship and for the imparting of religious education in the premises and training and maintaining missionaries. All surplus income should be free to be utilised for the practical benefit of the Hindu public, such as water supply, maintenance of the poor and orphans, famine relief, medical aid, agricultural improvement, etc. etc.

(*i*) The executive administration of all the subjects and all the institutions brought under the operation of the Bill should be vested in a permanent Department of the Government in the charge of one of the Hindu Ministers of the Government, and the offices of Mahants, Trustees, Managers, etc., should have the benefits of the security and discipline of Government service, and freedom to preserve their spiritual life.

(*j*) The elected Board and the Panchayats should have only legislative and advisory powers on matters affecting the public.

(*k*) There should be no separate judicial authority under the Bill. The executive will have sufficient power to carry out its orders; therefore all questions requiring judicial decision must be referred in the ordinary course to the Civil Courts of the Government.

(*l*) The above proposals will make the administration simpler, more efficient and free from corruption and less expensive. The Hindu public will be spared the trouble and worry of selfish wranglings at the frequent elections. The Government need not abdicate its legitimate duties and powers to a Caste-Raj. An educated order of Sadhus will be created.

All the Sections of the Bill should be recast in the spirit of the above suggestions.

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STRAY NOTES

(By A. R. Dard, M.A.)

I

The Meaning of *Badi'*

The word *badi'* (originator) used in the Holy Quran about God makes it clear that God is the Creator of matter, energy, ether, time, space and soul and that the world has had a beginning and is not eternal as supposed by the materialists. By his "law of substance" Prof. E. Haeckel says that he has definitely ruled out God (*The Riddle of the Universe*, London, 1934, p. 190); but he forgets the logic of J. S. Mill who says that 'the laws of nature do not account for their own origin'. It is certainly not in the nature of law either to create or to maintain itself. Both the creation and the maintenance of law proceed from God.

II

"Son of God"

Christians look upon Christ as 'the only begotten Son of God. (John 3 : 16.) They cannot think of the Supreme Being "simply as a Person, a lonely Sovereign enthroned above the Universe: if He be One, yet His Unity must be such as to comprehend and not exclude plurality; if He be Love, His love must be such as to give scope for self-bestowal within His own Being". (*Doctrine in the Church of England*, London, 1938, p. 98.)

As regards the origin of this doctrine it will suffice to say that, failing to get converts from among the Jews, the followers of Christ turned their attention to the Romans and the Greeks. They began to colour their own faith in the views prevalent among those

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people and took to representing Christ as the son of God and began to preach the Trinity. The Jewish idiom 'Son of God" used for Christ in the New Testament was employed as a convenient instrument for furthering this scheme. It was formed a basis for the Godhead of Jesus. But this was quite unjustifiable, because this idiom was used by the Jews in the sense of 'a beloved servant of God' or 'a prophet' and it has been used at many places in the Bible for other men as well. (Luke 20 : 36 ; Matt. 5 : 9, 45, 48 ; Deut. 14 : 1 ; Ex. 4 : 22 ; Galat. 3 : 26 ; Wisdom of Solomon, 2 : 18). So it was only to win the sympathy of powerful European nations that an erroneous significance was put upon the term 'Son of God'. *The Encyclopædia Britannica* says that the moulds of thought in the doctrine of the Trinity "are those of Greek philosophy, and into these were run the Jewish teachings". (Under 'Christianity.')

The Quran completely explodes this doctrine, and advances several arguments to show its absurdity. It should also be noted here that Prof. N. Schmidt says that "A careful examination of the gospels tends to produce the conviction that Jesus never assumed the title 'Son of God' either to designate himself as the expected king of Israel or to intimate that his nature was unlike that of other men, but that he spoke of men in general as 'the sons of God' and of God as their Father, and also used the expression as a mark of distinction for those whose character resembled God's". (*Encyclopædia Biblica*, cols. 4703-4704).

III

The Meaning of *Hanif*

The word *Hanif* has led to several conjectures on the part of Western scholars. C. J. Lyall says that it is a loan word from Aramaic (I. R. A. S. 1903, pp. 771-784). Torrey says that its origin is Hebrew. Margoliouth thinks it is Syriac. Hitti says that a group of people who were dissatisfied with the antiquated paganism of Arabia went by the name of Hanifs.

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They developed a vague monotheistic idea, and included among them men like Umayya ibn abi Salt and Waraqah ibn Naufal. This word was applied, it is said, by the Hijazi Jews to Abraham as a term of high praise, because he turned and fled away from the worship of false gods at Ur.

But the plain truth is that this word is a pure Arabic word from *hanafa* which means 'he inclined'. 'Hanif' is one who inclines away from error to guidance (Mufradat), or 'inclining to a right state'. (Lane).

Abul Qulabah says that Hanif is one who believes in all prophets, rejecting none of them. (*Ibn Kathir*, p. 325).

IV

Tur

The Arabic word *Tur* used in the Quran means a Mountain; and at-Tur refers to Mount Sinai. In 23 : 21 it is called Tur-i-Saina and in 95 : 3 the word is Tur-i-Sinin.

The identification of this Mountain of Moses has been a long controversy between Western scholars. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* (1923) supports the traditional view; but Lina Eckenstein, who worked in Sinai with Prof. F. Petrie, seems to identify the Mount with Serabit (*A History of Sinai*, London, 1921, p. 74). The *Encyclopædia Biblica* says that "Mt. Serbal has most to be said in its favour" (col. 4641). But the *Encyclopædia Britannica* says "Most authorities still prefer Jebel Musa or some point in that group" (under Sinai). The *Encyclopædia of Islam* says (under al-Tur) that the traditional Sinai is now called Djabal Musa. The Chief Rabbi also supports the same view by saying that "By careful local investigation Robinson arrived at the conviction that there was space enough in the plain El-Raha to satisfy all the requirements of the Scripture narrative". (Commentary, p. 291).

It should be remembered that the Quran, as such, is not concerned with topography or geography; and

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as the necessary details for identification are not available, all attemps in this direction seem to be vain. It appears that the Holy Places of a religion remain well known to its followers so long as the faith pulsates with life. When the people lose and forget the true spirit of the faith and it has served its purpose in the world, its Holy Places are also hidden from view under the vicissitudes of time, and its followers either lose possession of them or get out of all touch with them. It is indeed wonderful and unique how Islam has preserved possession not only of its Holy Book and its Holy Places but also of its original life and true spirit throughout the centuries. No power on earth has been, or ever shall be, able to destroy the Faith.

V

Calf-Worship

It is said to have been the image of a young but full grown bull—a wooden case overlaid with gold. The worship of the calf is a most important incident in the History of Israel. The Bible gives its story in Ex. 32. The Quran refers to it in 4 : 154 ; 2 : 94 ; 7 : 149 153 ; 20 : 89.

Western scholars have discussed the origin of calf-worship to trace the source of this error of the Israelites. In this connection it may be remembered in general that the bull is held in great veneration in all agricultural countries as the symbol of strength and vital energy. But, says the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, "To the nomads of the wilderness, who did not breed cattle, the idea of choosing the bull as an image of divinity could hardly have occurred."

Whence, then, did the Hebrews derive this idea? "The answer", says Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* (Vol. I, under 'Calf', 10th Edition, 1924), "almost uniformly given from the days of Philo and the early fathers to our own has been : The Hebrews borrowed this symbolism from the Egyptians." But this authority differs from this view and raises some

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objections, the chief of which is that the Egyptians worshipped only the living bulls of Apis and Mnevis. This objection is, however, dismissed by the *Encyclopædia of Religions and Ethics* (under 'Bull') as "not convincing, since votive images of the Egyptian bulls Apics and Mnevis are numerous." See also E. Renan's *History of the People of Israel*, London 1888, p. 125, note. Another objection is that the Israelites would have preferred in this matter something genuinely national after their deliverance. Against this it should be pointed out that before their entering into Egypt they had hardly any such traditions.

Man is influenced by his environment. He imitates and assimilates the views of the people among whom he happens to live. This is specially true of a subject people, who generally imitate the manners and customs of their rulers. The Israelites had lived under the Pharaohs for a long time. According to the Talmud they had lived for 210 years. (Translation by H. Polano, p. 138). So they had imbibed their faith. They had even requested Moses to get them idols for worship. (7 : 139) : and when Moses went up to Mount Sinai, they took the opportunity to make a calf and began to worship it.

VI

Pharaoh

W. Max Muller says that "the word is derived from the expression for 'King' used by the later Egyptians." Lane says that it is "the surname of every king of Egypt ; or anyone inordinately proud or corrupt."

One of the two Pharaohs mentioned in the Scriptures seems to be Rameses II of the 19th Dynasty. His dates are variously given as 1300-1234 B. C. E. (Petrie) and 1347-1280 (Mahler). 'He succeeded at an early age and reigned 67 years'. (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Egypt ; and Brugsch, *History of Egypt*, Vol. II, p. 110). According to Ex. 1 : 11, he is said to be the Pharaoh of oppression. Moses was born during his reign.

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"Under the reign of Ramses II one often gets the impression that he considered himself a superhuman being standing in direct communication with the gods. Like Amenhotep III, we often find him in the Nubian temples too, worshipping his own person, which is seated between Amen and Mut, or Khnem or Anuqat." (*The Historians' History of the World* by H. S. Williams, Vol. I, London, p. 152).

The Exodus itself is held by scholars to have taken place under his son, Menremptah or Menephtah. He is said to have held the throne for 8 years. Like his father he commonly held his court at Tanis. His mummy was found in Thebes and is now in the museum of Cairo (*Encyclopædia Biblica*). It appears Moses returned to Egypt from Midian during his reign.

"The disappearance of the old hero, Ramses II, did not produce many changes in the condition of affairs in Egypt. Meneptah from this time forth possessed as Pharaoh the power which he had previously wielded as regent.....he was now sixty, possibly seventy, years old." (*Historians' History of the World*, pp. 162-163). "Chronological reasons demand that we place the Exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt in the reign of this Pharaoh." (*Ibid.*, p. 165).

It may be added here that an inscription discovered in 1896 has led the *Encpclopædia Biblica* to conclude that Menremptah was not the Pharaoh of Exodus. (col. 3688). This inscription is a song of triumph of Menremptah: "Canaan is seized with every evil; Ashkelon is carried away; Gezer is taken; Yenoam is annihilated; Ysiraal is desolated, its seed is rot?" It is inferred from this that Israel must have been in Canaan at that time: and that the Exodus must have taken place long before. But the word Ysiraal is not yet finally identified with Israel. Prof. Kennett understands it to be 'Jezreel'. Even if it does mean Israel, it can refer to the settlements in Palestine by Israelites from Egypt before the Exodus (Jampel). There is therefore no reason to dissent from the current view.

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VII

The Jewish and Christian Conceptions of Salvation

The Jews think themselves to be practically immune from punishment. *The Jewish Encyclopædia* says, "The fire of Gehenna does not touch the Jewish sinners because they confess their sins before the gates of hell and return to God." (Vol. V, 1903, under Gehenna). According to R. Akiba, "The punishment of the wicked endures twelve months." (*Jewish Encyclopædia* under Eschatology). *Hastings' Encyclopædia of Religions and Ethics* says, "The writer of the Ecclesiasts leaves the impression that Sheol had come to be so negative that it was practically non-existent, and that death was thought to end all:" (under State of the Dead, p. 842).

"Though it is a fact that Judaism has usually refrained from defining with precision the details and circumstances of the future world contenting itself with a belief in its reality." (*Hastings' Encyclopædia*, under Judaism, p. 583); yet the Jews believe that 'it is chiefly the heathen who are to be cast into the fiery pool on the Day of Judgment' and that God will put 'worms into their flesh, so that they cry out with pain unto all eternity'; while the fire of Gehenna will not touch the Jewish sinners. (*Jewish Encyclopædia* under Gehenna).

Some Jews believe that all Gentiles will "descend for ever either into Sheol or into Gehenna. If, anywhere, they are represented as having part in the resurrection, it is only that they may be committed to severer and never-ending torment." (*Encyclopædia Biblica*, cols. 1371-1372).

The case of Christians is no better than that of the Jews. The *Encyclopædia Biblica* says: "Since the resur rection is possible only through living fellowship with Christ, there can be no resurrection of the wicked." (Col. 1385). Rev. P. H. Malden of the "Catholic Truth Society," London, says: "Outside the Church there is no salvation." (Pamphlet D.O. 109, p. 5).

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Again he says: "We are not saved by His (Christ's) teaching, example, and inspiration, but by Himself." (p. 16).

The Christians say that eternal salvation can be obtained "only by the Name of Christ"; and that "works done before the grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God..... We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith: and not for our own works or deservings." (Articles of Religion agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of both provinces, and the whole clergy, in the convocation holden at London in the year 1562).

Both of them forget that their own scriptures speak of the advent of a Prophet, about whom God says: "Whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him." (Deut. 18 : 19). The truth of the matter is that Christianity, as well as Judaism, was meant for the guidance of the Israelites alone. The mission of Jesus was not meant for the whole world. (Matt. 7 : 6; 10 : 6; 15 : 24; Mark. 7 : 27). Though later on the followers of Christ violated the limit imposed upon Christ's mission and claimed universality for it, yet Christ claimed to have been sent only for the Israelites. But as other nations of the world are also the creation of God, it is only right that God should have made some arrangement for their guidance as well. Hence, it is quite unreasonable on the part of the Jews and Christians to hold that the door of salvation is closed against the followers of all other faiths.

Islam is not a tribal faith. It is universal in character. (7 : 159). Again unlike Judaism and Christianity it does not teach that hell is everlasting.

Islam does not lend any support to the idea that salvation is a free gift to a certain class of men in whose case punishment, if resorted to at all, will be only a nominal one; but never-ending hell will be the lot of all the rest of mankind.

According to Islam the mere profession of a faith does not entitle one to salvation. Nor is there any

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particular caste, or race chosen by God for this purpose. Salvation can be attained through true faith and good works. The faithless who are encompassed by their sins will meet with punishment in proportion to the gravity of their sins.

VIII

The Meaning of جبرئیل

جبرئیل is the name of an angel who brings messages of God to His servants. (Dan. 8 : 16 ; 9 : 21 ; Luke 1 : 19, 26). The Quran also assigns to him the same function.

But it appears that in later Jewish literature he became associated with fire and thunder, (*Encyclopædia Biblica*, col. 1578), and Jewish theosophists made Michael, the chief and greatest of the four great angels (*Encyclopædia Biblica*, col. 3075) ; because he was called ' the great prince ' of Israel in the Bible. (Dan. 10 : 13, 21 ; 12 : 1.). In the time of the Holy Prophet the Jews openly called Gabriel their enemy who brought war, bloodshed and punishment. (Musnad of Ahmad Hanbal : Ibn Kathir.).

According to the *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the O. T.* by F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs (Oxford, 1929) the Hebrew word for Gabriel is pronounced as *Gavriale* ; *gavr* means ' man ' *El* means ' God '. So it means ' man of God '. The Assyrian word *Gabru* means ' rival '. In Aramaic and Syrian the word for ' man ' is *Givar*. But M. Jastrow says that Gabriel means ' divine strength '. (*Dictionary of the Talmud*, 1926). In Arabic, the word Jabr (which in Hebrew has become *gavr*) means 'to mend' or 'to force'. Hence it also means 'a king' or 'a courageous man' or ' a man ', or ' a servant.' (Lane).

There is much difference of opinion as to the origin, meaning and derivation of the word *El*. According to Nold, both *el* ond *ilah* were already in existence side by side before the parting of the Semitic nations. Assuming this, it would appear that the word

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El gradually became more identified with Hebrew, and ceased to be used in Arabic as a separate word. In the Babylonian language it became *ilu*. A. H. Sayace says that the words *El* and *Elah* (or *Eloah*, of which the plural is *Elohim*) stand side by side in Hebrew alone; "While *Elah* was unknown to the Phonecians, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians, *El* was unknown to the Aramean and Arabian tribes, except where it entered into the composition of archaic proper names." (*Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. II, London, 1890, p. 26). *The Hebrew and English Lexicon* of the O. T. says that *El* means 'mighty'; but the *Encyclopædia Biblica* mentions some objections to this view, and says that Lagarde maintains that *el* denotes: him 'after whom one strives', 'who is the goal of all human aspirations and endeavour'. (col. 3326).

Ilah is a proper Arabic word and has always been used as such; but *El*, as it stands, is not found in Arabic Lexicons, though Arabic is the oldest language. O'Leary says: "Arabia was the centre of distribution of the Semitic languages and, in all probability, their area of specialisation.....The speech of Arabia was less affected by alien influences than any other of the Semitic languages." (*Comparative Grammar*, London, 1923, p. 16). Prof. D. S. Margoliouth says: "When the student compares the sense of the Hebrew verbs with that of the corresponding Arabic, he finds that the latter take him a stage further back; show, if we may so say, edges which in the Hebrew usage have been polished off. Of many a word which is isolated in Hebrew the Arabic language exhibits a large kindred; such relics are like branches removed from the parent stock; in Arabic it still thrives." (*Relations between Arabs and Israelites*, London, 1924, p. 5.) It shows that Arabic is the mother of Hebrew, so it would not be unreasonable to suppose that the Hebrew word *El* is a distortion or an altered form of some Arabic word. Now there are one or two possibilities. The Arabic word إِلٌّ means 'God', 'revelation' 'lordship', 'relationship' etc. 'Ibn-El-Kelbee

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says when اِلّ ends any name, it has this meaning (God), ...and so اِيل ; as in جبرئل and جبرئيل ; and so say most of the learned, but this is not a valid assertion (Lane). The other possible Arabic word which may be connected whith *El* is آئل (or even ايلة) from آلَ *i.e.*, he returned. آئل means ' a ruler ' ; and ايلة signifies ' the relations to whom one goes or is traced back in geneology '.

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MOHAMMAD THE SPIRITUAL FATHER

By S. Abdur Rahman (Mehr Singh), B.A.

It is generally believed that there will be no prophet after the Holy Prophet Mohammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him). This is, however, a serious mistake. A true Moslem can hardly entertain the idea that Moses whose mission was confined to one land and one community only was assisted by 40,000 prophets who had to set agoing the teaching of the Old Testament, while the Holy Prophet whose mission is universal and for the redemption of all the peoples of the world is to have no prophet to lead his community when they might go astray from Islam.

The Holy Prophet foretold that a time would come when the Moslems would be Moslems only in name, and that they would be divided into 73 sects of whom all would be destined to Hell except one sect who would alone be the torch-bearer of true Islam. The adherents of that sect, he said, would be like his Companions *i.e.*, they would hold the flag of Islam in every land under one Imam or Khalifa, while other Moslems would not be in the control of any one single leader.

It should be clearly understood that since the creation of Adam and Eve the most merciful God has all along been raising prophets whenever the people of a country had gone astray. This continued to be so as long as the different peoples and distant countries were separated from each other by impassable seas, oceans and mountains. A single prophet could not be heard and obeyed by all the inhabitants of distant lands. Moses was a law-giving prophet whose book, the Old Testament, had to be explained and interpreted by divine teachers called avatars or prophets. Moses' spiritual power was not so strong as to keep his people on the right path even in his lifetime.

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The Israelites had gone astray during his temporary absence of 40 days at Senai. To continue his work after his death thousands of prophets were raised to guide the Israelites along the path chalked out in the Law given to him. Jesus Christ, son of Mary, was the last among them.

The Holy Prophet of Mecca was like Moses in giving a Law or Shariat to the human race. But his spiritual power was so great that the Moslems did not deviate from the right path for hundreds of years. So for the last 1300 years local errors and mistakes creeping into the Moslem lands, were eradicated and rectified by local reformers or *Mujaddids* of whom there has been one for every century. But after the lapse of 1300 years the Moslem world entirely lost the true spirit and practice of Islam. This decline of the Moslems in belief and practice had gone so far that the majority of Moslems were Moslems only in name ; so much so that 35,00,000 Moslems even deserted Islam and embraced Christianity in India not to say of other countries.

The Holy Prophet predicted that in the latter days :

لا يبقى من الاسلام الا اسمه ولا يبقى من الاحكام الا رسمه.

There would not remain of Islam but its name, while of its teaching and ritual there would not remain anything except an outward, hollow, mechanical observance thereof.

Under these circumstances, we learn from the *Hadith*, the Promised Messiah—a Persian by descent, would bring down faith from Heaven.

Foreseeing the general demoralised state of the Moslem world the Holy Prophet said that the Promised Messiah would come as a prophet (see صحيح مسلم).

Of all the foregoing Mujaddids none but the Promised Messiah has been styled as a prophet. Evidently the reform to be brought about was to be so vast, so world-wide, and of such tremendous import as to be beyond the capabilities of an ordinary reformer.

Now let us see whether or not the Holy Quran is silent on the coming of a prophet. The Quran says :

And when Allah made a covenant through the pro-

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phers: Certainly what I have given you of the Book and wisdom, then an apostle comes to you verifying that which is with you, you must believe in him and you must aid him. (III : 80)

This verse implies that all prophets were enjoined to exhort their followers to believe in the prophets that might come from time to time after their departure from the world. Exactly in similar words the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be on him) was also enjoined by God in the Quran to order his followers to believe in and support a prophet that would be raised after the Holy Prophet. The verse runs thus :

"And when We made a covenant with the prophets and with *you* and with Noah and Abraham and Moses and Jesus, son of Mary, and We made with them a strong covenant. (XXVIII, : 7.)

This verse makes it perfectly clear that as God enjoined all prophets such as Noah, Abraham and Jesus relating to the advent of a prophet, in like terms God has also enjoined the Holy Prophet to order his followers to believe in the advent of a prophet. The fact is that every prophet in charge of his community commanded his people to believe in the coming prophets. In the same way the Holy Prophet himself in compliance with God's covenant commanded his followers to believe in and aid a prophet who would come in the latter days, guiding and reforming the Moslems as Jesus Christ did for the Israelites or Jews. Had there been no prophet to come after the Holy Prophet, then a covenant in regard to the coming of a prophet after him would have never been made at all with the Holy Prophet.

It would appear that if the Promised Messiah of Qadian had not claimed to have come as a prophet, he would have never been accepted because the Moslems would have forthwith rejected him for the simple reason that the rejection of an ordinary reformer or Mujaddid did not expel them from the pale of Islam. One can easily understand that the unification of 73 sects of Moslems was wholly dependent upon the

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acceptance of the Promised Messiah as a prophet whom the Holy Prophet styled in clear terms as a prophet and ordered every Moslem to convey his *salam* to him—an honour which was kept in store for the Promised Messiah alone, of whose advent the Holy Prophet said that it would be as though he had himself come a second time, and that he who did not follow him would have no concern with the Holy Prophet.

The seal of Prophets or the spiritual father of the future generations

It will be remembered that the Holy Prophet's wives have been called in the Quran as the "mothers of the believers." It is evident that they are our mothers spiritually as the Holy Prophet is our spiritual father. The verses are :—

> " His wives are their mothers." (XXXIII : 6.) " Mohammad is not father of any male among you but he is the Apostle of Allah and the seal of the Prophets, and Allah is cognizant of all things " (XXX : 40).

The above verses clearly point out that neither Mohammad was the physical father of any man nor were his wives the physical mothers of Moslems. But at the same time it is a fact that both Mohammad and his wives were and still are spiritual parents of Moslems. So we can safely come to the conclusion that the Holy Prophet is spiritual father of four grades of sons :

النبيين ـ الصديقين والشهداء والصالحين ـ

Other Prophets have been the spiritual fathers of three grades of righteous people only, *i.e.*, the *siddeeqeen* and *shohada* and *saleheen* ; but the Holy Prophet includes the *nabeeyeen* also among his spiritual sons—and herein lies his great and unique distinction. It is needless to point out that every prophet in his day has been the spiritual father of those who believed in him, among whom are *siddeeqeen*, *shohada*, *saleheen* ; and if the Holy Prophet also was the spiritual father of only these three grades of believers he stood no higher in this respect than the 1,24,000 other prophets.

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But every Moslem believes that the Holy Prophet stands on a far higher plain and the view consistent with this belief is that he excelled the other prophets as he was also the spiritual father of not only the *siddeeqeen, shohada* and *saleheen* but of the *nabeeyeen* (prophets) as well.

This is the meaning of the "Seal of Prophets." The seal of prophets does not imply the stoppage of prophets. On the contrary it restricts the divine favours of *nabuwwat* (prophethood) to the true Moslems and excludes non-Moslems. This is the seal which differentiates between *Islam* and *Kufr*. Verse 69 of chapter IV clearly sets forth that the true followers of the Holy Prophet are the prophets, the *siddeeqeen* the *shohada* and the *saleheen*. Had there been no prophet to come the 1st grade of spiritual sons of the Holy Prophet would not have been mentioned so clearly in this verse. If you deny the first grade, the last three grades will also be nullified, with the result that Moslems like non-Moslems would be deprived of God's favours which we directly pray for. For the Moslems to be deprived of the favours of God is tantamount to their being outside the pale of Islam and in that case the Holy Prophet would be issueless physically as well as spiritually.

Various Shades of Prophethood

It should never be forgotten that as God is physically beneficent to men of all castes and creeds, similarly He is spiritually kind and generous to the men of all classes. So He bestows favour in due proportion upon all mankind. Even an idolatrous Hindu or a Christian receives His spiritual favours in the form of dreams or visions. These dreams and visions are not very clear for he can hardly see in the prophetic world. His spiritual senses are blurred, hazy and undeveloped ; but they give him a personal experience on a minute scale of these spiritual phenomena so that he can have no difficulty in appreciating the claims of a prophet of which the primary basis are dreams and visions and the *wahyee* (revelation) vouchsafed to him by

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God. The seed of prophethood, thus, is ingrained in human nature all the world over, and it is meant by God to serve as a basis for belief in prophethood. The door of Prophethood remains open for all times.

Prophethood to remain in Abraham's seeds for ever

It is a historical fact that Abraham had two sons : Ishmael and Isaac. God raised 40,000 prophets from the seed of Isaac. The Arabs are the seeds of Ishmael the 2nd son of Abraham. The Quran says " We.....caused prophethood and the book to remain in his (Abraham's) seed, *i.e.*, God promised both of Abraham's sons that continuation of prophethood would be granted for the guidance of the Israelites and the descendent of Ishmael. The Israelites were guided by 40,000 prophets who followed the direction of the Old Testament. Similarly God blessed the seed of Ishmael with the Holy Quran and everlasting prophethood. So this verse clearly signifies that the Moslems will also enjoy prophethood like Istaelites. These are the blessings and favours for which we pray day and night in our daily prayers when we daily repeat in the *drud* : " O Allah bless Mohammad and the followers of Mohammad as Thou didst bless Abraham and the followers of Abraham." So we can come to the conclusion that the true Moslem must enjoy prophethood as the followers of Abraham enjoyed it in the persons of thousands of prophets, *siddeeqees shaheeds* and *solaha*.

(2) " Allah chooses messengers from among the angels and from among *the men* (XXII : 75). Just as angels are sent down similarly messengers are also raised as occasion arises. Nobody says that the angels have ceased to work, similarly prophets must come when they are wanted by those who have gone astray.

(3) " O Children of Adam ! if there come to you any apostle from among you relating to you My sign....

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grieve " (VII. 35). This verse clearly implies that we the Children of Adam have been enjoined to believe in and follow the apostles that may come to us.

(4) " This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed my *favours* on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion. (V : 3). This verse clearly points out two things. (A) A perfect law or Religion, (B) God's favour or prophethood that we daily pray for (see I : 6, XXIX : 27, VII : 35, XXIII : 6, III : 80, XXIII : 7).

It is, therefore, safe to conclude that the door of prophethood remains open for the followers of Mohammad (peace and the blessings of God be upon him).

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